

# THE ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY®

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APM ARCHIVES OF RECORDED SOUND

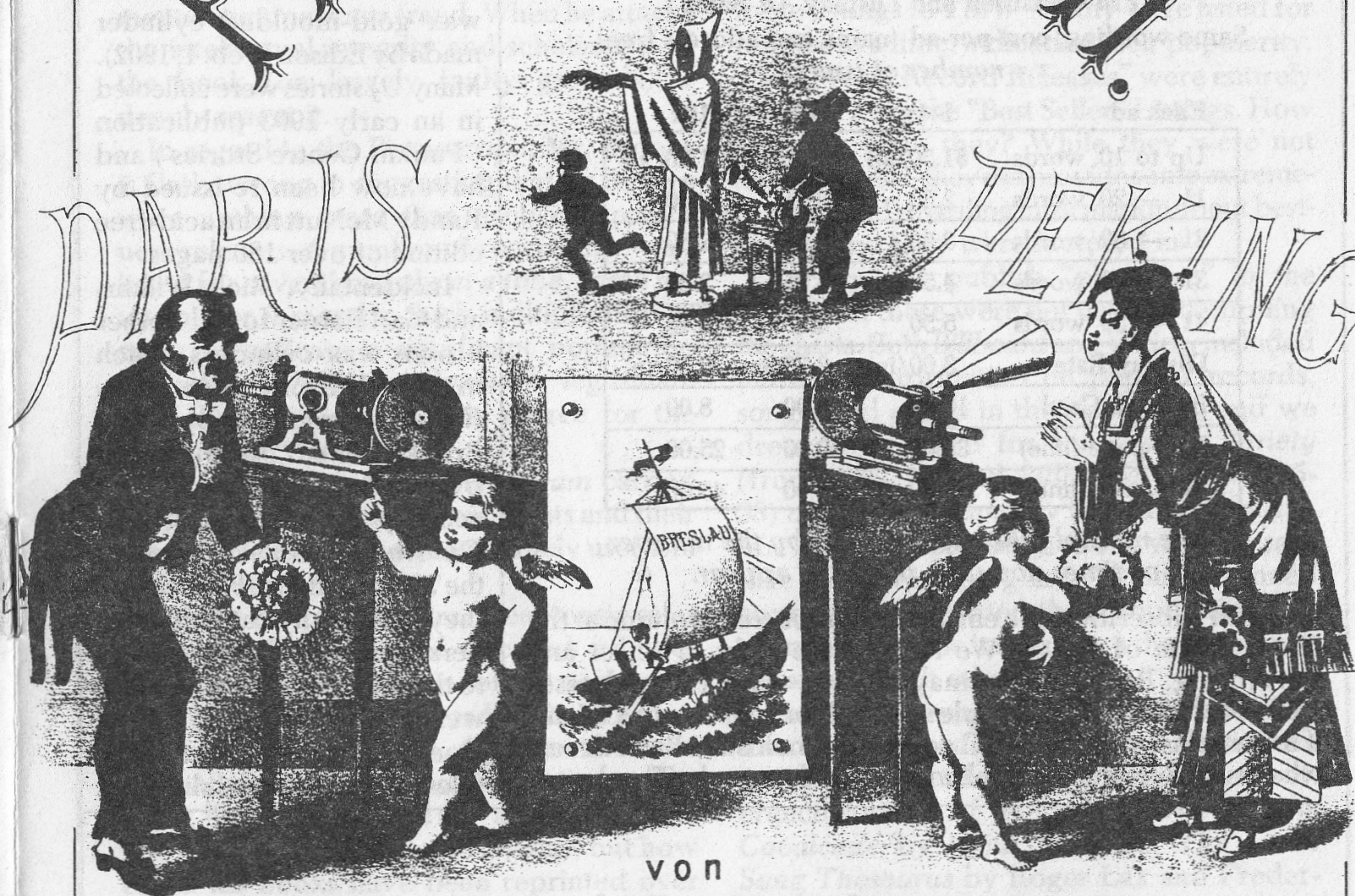
Issue No. 77

## PHONOGRAPH

### WALZER

PARIS

PEKING



VON

# AUGUST HEILMANN.

Op. 4.

Pr. { für Pianoforte ..... 1,50.  
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Mit Vorbehalt aller Arrangements.

Eigenthum des Verlegers für alle Länder. Eingetragen in das Verzeichniss.

BRESLAU,

JULIUS HAINAUER,

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Gebr. Hug.

New-York,  
G. Schirmer.

Paris,  
V. Durdilly & Co.

Leipzig,  
C. F. Leide.

John Reid of New Hampshire has discovered what seems to be an unknown piece of sheet music relating to the invention of the phonograph. Of course, there are two known ones: the first entitled *The Song of Mister Phonograph* by Henry Holden Huss, 1878, and the other entitled *The Phonograph March Brill ante* by Charles D. Blake, 1878. This new one, from the same period, shows a message being sent from Paris to Peking via tinfoil phonograph. Comic relief is provided at the top. Have any others turned up? □



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**DEAR APM:**

**Question:** Did any new 'Uncle Josh' titles turn up in researching the 2nd edition of *ECR*, 1889-1912? **L.B., Bellingham, WA**

**Answer:** It turned out that the 2-min. title of late-1897, *Where Am I At* (#1105) by Dan W. Quinn, was actually *Uncle Josh at the Midway!* We also discovered that #8003 - *Uncle Josh and the Fire Department* - was the first new title black wax gold-moulded cylinder made by Edison (Feb. 1, 1902). Many UJ stories were collected in an early 1903 publication ('Punkin Centre Stories') and have now been re-issued by Randy McNutt in an acid-free edition of over 180 pages.

Incidentally, Rick Wilkins and Carl Ratner found 3 other brown wax cylinders which may be Edisons: *Blue Grass Ruby*, a banjo solo by Ruby Brooks; *The Possum Chase* by Arthur Collins (w/ banjo acc. by F.C. Stanley); and *Our Nation's Guard March* by the 71st Reg. Band. But because they lacked any catalog numbers, some doubt remained as to their official status and they were not entered in *ECR*. Does anyone else have these titles (with numbered slips)? ☐

**Some New Books**

Readers of **APM**, Vol. III, no. 2 will recall the early inventor Oberlin Smith and his early work on the phonograph. Now Arthur Cox and Thomas Mallim have written a book on Smith's company (which manufactured machine presses) entitled *Ferracute: An American Enterprise*, 195 pages. It is available as a limited edition from the authors (of Bridgeton, NJ) for \$30.00, and it is a beautiful job of printing and research.

Collectors who wish more information on celluloid advertising buttons and premiums couldn't find a better or more handsome reference work than Ted Hake's & Russ King's *Collectible Pin-Back Buttons, 1896-1986*, (with price guide, 324 pp.). Many B&W and color photos show every imaginable button, including Nipper styles. Literally thousands are shown. It sells for \$48.00 from Hake's Americana, P.O. Box 1444, York, PA 17405.

Howard Hazelcorn (with his wife Jane) has recently issued two new price guides: one on those colorful and charming *Vienna Art Plates* (\$15.95), and the other on *Antique Electric Toasters (1908-1940)*, \$10.95. They are both well illustrated and researched with care - they are available from HJH Publications, P.O. Box 1066, Teaneck, NJ 07666. Howard has plans for other price guides too, even on phonographs! ☐



## Joel Whitburn Replies

We have received a lengthy reply from Joel Whitburn regarding Tim Brooks' review of *Pop Memories, 1890-1954* in the last issue of APM. Joel's edited reply follows below, and Tim answers after that. Who ever said that record research wasn't exciting?

"Dear Allen:

[Mr. Brooks], in the course of doing considerable research, has committed enough factual errors and missed enough points about *Pop Memories* to lay bare his fundamental argument as a fraud. When he attacks the intellectual integrity and scholarship of the book (on largely faulty grounds), I deeply resent it.

In regard to the *Phonoscope*, Mr. Brooks is flatly wrong in suggesting that its listings were nothing more than each company's new releases. A number of recordings were listed for several months *at a time*, some for up to 8 or 9 months. Such multiple listings seem to indicate a significant popularity. Therefore I feel it was absolutely legitimate to include this data as one source for the charts of the 1890s.

The *Phonoscope* and *Phonogram* carried anecdotal information about artists and their records. These were also extremely useful in determining popularity.

During the pre-1920 era, sheet music sales outstripped the sales of disc and cylinder records. *Pop Memories* is not just a compilation of best selling records - it includes, especially for the 1890s, data based on the sales of *sheet music* in addition to records.

Mr. Brooks disparages the "anecdotal music historians," (such as David Ewen), but how could his books have been reprinted over more than three decades, establishing his reputation as America's foremost popular musicologist? In most cases, the songs he cited as top sheet music seller and popular hits were confirmed by other sources.

Regarding ASCAP, Mr. Brooks neglects to mention that in 1978 a reference book entitled *ASCAP Hit Songs* included a listing of major song hits dating back to 1892 by writers who later became members of the organization. By the way, "After the Ball" and "Daisy Bell", two 1890s classics whose hit status was questioned by Mr. Brooks, were the first two songs listed in the ASCAP book. I have yet to encounter a musical history that doesn't include them among the biggest hits of the decade. Columbia's scant listings for these titles hardly disproves their

status as major hits.

As Mr. Brooks states, Jim Walsh's columns were primarily artist profiles, but in 40 years, he conveyed a tremendous amount of information on individual hit records. Several dozen of the charted records in *Pop Memories* were specifically cited by Mr. Walsh.

When Mr. Brooks states that *Talking Machine World* did not publish listings of best sellers, he is flat, dead wrong. In fact, from 1914-21, the record companies did furnish these listings to TMW - many were listed for months at a time, indicating their popularity. Their "New Record Releases" were entirely separate from the "Best Seller" Listings. How accurate were they? While they were not *totally* reliable, they did provide some extremely useful and revealing information about best-sellers, and they were factored in.

*Variety* did publish "plug lists" in the 1920s, but these were not used in compiling the charts. Both *Billboard* and *Variety* included narrative information on popular records, songs, and artists in their columns, and we drew upon these for the charts. *Variety* (from 1929-38) and *Billboard* (from 1935-38) *did* publish monthly lists of best sellers. Mr. Brooks is absolutely wrong when he says that these were plug lists - their continued appearance indicated their popularity. For the most part, the information they convey is consistent with other sources.

*Pop Memories* also consulted the following: *The Encyclopedia of Popular Music and Jazz* by Roger Kinkle (one of the finest reference sources of its kind); *Variety Music Cavalcade* by Julius Mattfeld; *The Great Song Thesaurus* by Roger Lax and Frederick Smith (top songs); *The Directory of Popular Music* by Leslie Lowe (useful); *The Book of Golden Discs* by Joseph Murrells (imperfect but valuable); *Billboard's* 1913-18 sheet music charts and vaudeville's most popular hits; *I've Heard Those Songs Before* by Elston Brooks (marginally useful for 1930-35); and *Billboard* and *Variety* weekly radio airplay and sheet music charts for 1933-40. All of these books were imperfect in some way - that is a fact of life every historian must learn to accept. This is the reason why the charts in *Pop Memories* were compiled from many sources - the imperfections could be filtered out!

Certain records cited by Mr. Brooks on the Victor label, "The Holy City" for example, were "evergreens" (selling slowly but



steadily for many years) - they would not "make the charts." If Columbia had a number of heavily shipped items, how strange that Columbia omitted them in its lists submitted to TMW during 1915-20.

I do not doubt that some records should have been included in *Pop Memories* but weren't. We had to rely on publicly available materials. For the period before 1930, I would say that the charts were more than 90% accurate, and after that, I would say 97 or 98% accurate. Many of the classical listings for Victor and Columbia were substantiated by other sources.

There is one criticism by Mr. Brooks that has some validity, namely that we created a misleading impression that record popularity was as ephemeral as it is today; however, we had to translate the reality of the "slow and steady" sellers of the 1890s record industry into 20th century terms. We couldn't very well list G. W. Johnson's "Laughing Song" as #1 for 50 weeks. By listing it for 10 weeks, we represented its position in the context of overall chart history.

By 1904 this problem was largely solved; the record industry had matured into a recognizable form, with "plug lists" and hits. I would not for a moment insist that the 1890-1904 weekly charts be literally accepted; however, the fundamental information about such hits as "Daisy Bell" (their peaks of popularity) are completely accurate and well-substantiated.

In a sense, charted *weeks* during the 1890s were functionally equivalent to *months* of popularity. Perhaps this point could be made in a future update. But it is beyond reasonable dispute that the songs listed in *Pop Memories* as the biggest hits of the decade *were* the biggest hits in the correct rank; the peak-position information is accurate; and the artists listed as the top recording artists were just that.

To conclude, the claim by Mr. Brooks that the charts were constructed out of thin air is utterly baseless. Every published source was carefully read, weighed for reliability, and carefully factored in. Are the charts perfect? No! This was a pioneering effort, and there is no doubt that we could come closer to the elusive ideal of 100% perfection by locating additional material. But every knowledgeable collector agrees that *Pop Memories* is overwhelmingly accurate and stands as the single most valuable work ever published on the pioneer recording era."

[edited by APM] See page 8

□

## FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

### *The Golden Age of Jazz Swing*

Joe Klee

Yes, Indeed, there was a Golden Age of Jazz. When it depends on how you define jazz, a term that has defied definition ever since it was first heard (as a noun, first as Creole 'jass') around the turn of the century in New Orleans, La. The spread of the term and the music dates probably to 1915 when Tom Brown and others brought it north.

There were rumors that Buddy Bolden and his band had recorded a cylinder in New Orleans prior to 1917, but it has never surfaced. My favorite scenario is that some enterprising New Orleans music store owner with a cylinder phonograph may well have offered to record your voice, instrument or band for the sum of whatever ... then if the recording artist owned a machine or thought enough of his efforts to want them preserved, he could purchase the recording for an additional sum. If not, the entrepreneur could simply shave down the cylinder and use it for the next customer. I have no doubt that the Bolden Band made a recording, but his subsequent health problems (post-1908) makes it likely that the earliest recorded evidence of a new music was lost for all time.

By 1917, Jazz Bands touring in vaudeville and playing in clubs had diffused the music outward to San Francisco, Chicago, Detroit, New York and all points above the Mason-Dixon Line. And the rest, as they say, is history. It was only a matter of place, time and who was there at the right moment as to who would make the first jazz record. The place was Reisenweber's Cafe in New York City. The *time* was 1917. The *who* was the Original Dixieland Jass Band ... a totally white band that split their repertoire between the New Orleans dixieland tunes and current tin pan alley favorites. They recorded two of the latter for Columbia on Jan. 30, 1917 - *Darktown Strutter's Ball* and *Back Home Again in Indiana*. Columbia was not sure what they had and not a little intimidated by this new music, so they held up release. Therefore, the sides that the ODJB had recorded for Victor a month later were the first issued by a "Jass" band. For Victor they recorded two nearly original compositions. I say nearly because *Dixie Jass Band One Step* had a strain that was lifted from Joe Jordan's



*That Teasin' Rag* with the consequence that the recording was finally issued as *Dixie Jass Band One Step* introducing *That Teasin' Rag*. For the genealogy of the other side, *Livery Stable Blues*, we have to go back even farther. When the charter members of the later ODJB (or at least some of them) left New Orleans in 1916, it was with Johnny Stein's band to play in Chicago. The cornetist Nick LaRocca, trombonist Eddie Edwards, and clarinetist Alcide "Yellow" Nunez then left the Stein band in Chicago. A dispute between Nunez and LaRocca fragmented the group further and Nunez took off with a band that he called the Louisiana Five, being replaced in the newly-formed ODJB by Larry Shields. Whether *Livery Stable Blues* was in the Stein band's book, I am uncertain, but LaRocca and the ODJB took up the tune under the name of *Livery Stable Blues*, while Nunez and the Louisiana Five played the tune as *Barnyard Blues*.

Here's where I get into trouble with Klee's famous opinionated writing style. In my opinion, both the ODJB and Louisiana Five were pale, white-washed imitations of the real true jazz which was not to be preserved on wax until 1923 when the pioneering Gennett label owned by the Starr Piano Company, Richmond, Indiana took a chance and recorded King Oliver's Creole Band, then playing the Lincoln Gardens in nearby Chicago, Illinois. The Oliver Band not only had Louisiana-born King Oliver on first cornet, the Dodds brothers (clarinetist Johnny and his brother Warren "Baby" Dodds on drums), but they had a second cornet out of the crescent city with the taste of red beans and rice still fresh in his mouth and the sound of Bolden and Keppard still fresh in his music. The man's name was Louis Armstrong - better known at the time as "Little Louie". With that band's first record session, April 6, 1923, the die was cast and the Jazz Age began in earnest. As jazz, both as played by the ODJB and their satellites - such as the Memphis Five - and by Oliver's Band and their satellites - such as Armstrong's Hot Five - grew more popular, the big bands decided to include, at first, hot numbers and finally hot soloists. By 1929, Paul Whiteman could boast that he was the King of Jazz simply because he knew the right musicians to hire (Bix Beiderbecke, Frank Trumbauer, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, the Dorsey brothers and most importantly, arranger Bill Challis who could make written arrangements that sounded hot and improvised).

This was in fact the end of the Jazz Age

and the beginning of the Swing Era, though they were to overlap considerably for another decade or so. Arrangements were written out, few of them as good as those by the best arrangers - Challis, Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman, Benny Carter, and Duke Ellington. And holes were left, even by such sweet music purveyors as Guy Lombardo and Ben Bernie, for hot soloists to shine through. Bernie even made the historic step of hiring Negro trumpeter Bill "Jazz" Moore to play in his band at the Hotel Roosevelt. Moore was whited-up with talcum powder and passed off as "The Hot Hawaiian". With the middle thirties, the swing era reached its apex when Benny Goodman formed a big band specifically to play arrangements that swung, with plenty of open spaces for the soloists and a jazz feeling to the written parts, mostly by arrangers Fletcher Henderson, Edgar Sampson and Jimmy Mundy. They called it "swing" and Benny Goodman inherited Paul Whiteman's old title and became the King of Swing. A superb instrumentalist and improviser, Goodman was far more deserving of the title than the Whiteman who played second fiddle along with his band and when required to take a hot solo for the film *The King of Jazz* (in the cartoon sequence which precedes the film proper) had to have it ghosted by Joe Venuti.

Now, just as Caruso earned more money singing for the New York public at the Metropolitan Opera House than he ever did back home in Italy, Jazz became a valuable export. Minor players and superlative artists such as Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Duke Ellington, Sidney Bechet, and the Original Dixieland Jazz (even they eventually changed the spelling) Band did very well in recorded sales to the European public, and especially the British, as well as making successful tours abroad. Meanwhile, their recordings were being marketed in the U.S., mainly in the black ghettos. But then the imported artists always achieve more fame and fortune . . . which still holds true today when many jazz artists are earning more money and reputation abroad than at home.

Jazz records sold well in Europe. In France, critics Charles Delaunay and Hughes Panassie formed a label called Swing to record Jazz and/or Swing music made by such local celebrities as violinist Stephane Grappelly and guitarist Django Reinhardt and their Quintet of the Hot Club of France and such visiting firemen as Benny Carter (alto saxophone) and Coleman Hawkins



(tenor saxophone) out of Henderson's band. British labels such as Parlophone and Columbia were hungry for American jazz product ... enter jazz critic, aficionado and fanatic John Hammond. Never one to pass up an opportunity to promote the music (he already enough dollars from his family fortune that he didn't need to worry about that end of it), Hammond went to work supply jazz product for a hungry British public. Incidentally, he provided work for some hungry depression-era jazz musicians as well. When Hammond approached Benny Goodman on his return from Europe and asked him how he'd like to do a record date for Columbia, Benny thought he was kidding. Benny had just spoken with Ben Selvin of American Columbia which was scraping its way through hard times with no work for the esoteric jazz musicians and had been told there was nothing for him in the foreseeable future. What Benny didn't realize was that John Hammond was talking about English Columbia which was very solvent and whose director Louis Sterling was anxious for jazz masters to issue on his label. The recordings Hammond made for several British labels eventually wound up as part of that conglomerate catch-all of British recordings - EMI. Some were issued stateside on Columbia ... others eventually came out on Black Label Decca in various volumes of the *Gems of Jazz* series. And gems they most certainly were with names like Henderson, Hawkins, Venuti, Goodman, and so many others. The notable absentee was Louis Armstrong who spent most of the early thirties under contract to the Victor Company and then switched to the Decca label. Therefore, although the records eventually came out in the U.S. on Decca, Decca's leading jazz artist (my opinion again, so you 'Basie/Lunceford' freaks, bug off) was not included since the U.S. producing agent was associated with Columbia.

Which brings us to Hugh Fordin and DRG records who have reissued the most important of these Hammond-produced gems on compact disc ... licensed from EMI ... and a CD of Coleman Hawkins and Benny Carter as recorded on the Swing label both in Paris and in New York.

If you take one fact away from this article, let it be this one: *These are among the most important jazz recordings ever produced.* No one who claims to love jazz should fail to take advantage of the opportunity of hearing these sides.

DRG CDSW 8403 *Coleman Hawkins and Benny Carter* is just that. During the mid- to

late-30s, these two musicians spent a great deal of time abroad. They met in Paris March 7, 1938 for one truly seminal recording session which had implications for all the jazz which followed. These two stalwarts of the Fletcher Henderson saxophone section joined forces with French saxophonists Andre Ekyan on alto sax and Alix Combelle on tenor sax. Fine as these players were in their own little pond, they gave their American guests no qualms. If there was any cutting to be done, it was evident in front that Carter and Hawkins would be the ones doing it. Perhaps this is why it turns out to be more a blending of talents than a cutting contest. As such, these four sides - *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Crazy Rhythm*, *Out of Nowhere*, and *Sweet Georgia Brown* are still unmatched among masterpieces of jazz saxophonology. The rhythm section was a mix and match of Frenchmen Grappelly on piano rather than violin, Django on guitar and their Hot Club Quintet bassist of the moment, Eugene d' Hellmes. The drummer was Tommy Benford, another American visitor, well known for his recordings with Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers. Actually things worked well. I think I hear Carter's touch as an arranger in the fact that Grappelly and Reinhardt play the right chord changes. For an example of how they could flounder when left unaided, listen to the *Star Dust* of March 2, 1935 and wonder, as I did on first hearing, what composer Hoagy Carmichael must have thought when he heard the strange set of harmonics set up by Reinhardt & Grappelly for Hawkins to improvise over. It is to Hawkins' credit that total disaster was avoided and this side, like all others in this collection, is a masterpiece in spite of the flaws. Hawk's accompaniment on the other tracks of the CD is provided by Michael Warlop's big (by the standards of those days) band. The sessions under Benny Carter's name are not quite up to the Hawkins/-Carter sides of 1937, but they are good enough on their own merits. On *I'm Comin' Virginia* there's a chorus scored for saxophone section which aptly illustrates Carter's ability as an arranger. On *Blue Light Blues* there is a Benny Carter trumpet chorus which illustrates why some jazz fans, me included, like Carter's trumpet work every bit as much (or even more so) as his saxophone playing. The last four sides by Carter were made in New York August 23, 1946 when Delaunay came to America to make the first postwar sides for his Swing label. *Sweet Georgia Brown* shows up again nine



years later and one hears more than a touch of the new thing - bebop - in the playing of Benny Carter on alto sax and Ben Webster on tenor sax as well as from drummer Big Sid Cattlett who had participated in some early bebop recordings with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker the previous year. It's a different *Sweet Georgia Brown*. Whether it's better or worse depends on your feelings about bebop versus the Harlem Jam School of the thirties. One should also note as part of the personnel of these post-war Benny Carter sides the presence of Kansas-City-style trumpeter Buck Clayton and bassist John Simmons, then a fixture on 52nd Street, whose daughter Sue Simmons is now a fixture on the nightly news in New York.

Their other two CD sets on DRG (2 CDs each) are *Jazz in the Thirties* CDSW 8457/58 and *Ridin' in Rhythm* CDSW 8453/54 and they were, with a few exceptions, recorded in America by John Hammond. They reflect Hammond's taste which I would have to call middle of the road. There's little in here to shock the conservative sensibilities of even the listeners of the thirties, yet there is no preservation of earlier styles for its own sake. The major names involved are Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, and Bunny Berigan, as well as such lesser names - but not lesser talents - as Joe Sullivan, Bud Freeman, Jess Stacy and Meade Lux Lewis.

If I carried on giving each item on these four CDs the raves they deserve, this article would be double the length, so I will hit only the high points.

Jazz in the thirties included a great deal of violinist Joe Venuti and clarinetist Benny Goodman, including one of their all-too-rare collaborations... Joe Venuti and His Blue Six recorded on October 2, 1933. If the term 'all-star' is overused, it is not misplaced on this band which in addition to Venuti and Goodman, includes Bud Freeman on tenor sax, Adrian Rollini on bass sax, and Joe Sullivan on piano. These four sides - *Doin' the Uptown Lowdown*, *Sweet Lorraine*, *Jazz Me Blues* and *In De Ruff* (a thinly disguised version of King Oliver's *Dippermouth Blues*) knocked me out when I heard them as a teenager on Decca 78s and they've been favorites ever since. Then there's Jess Stacy, pianist with Benny Goodman's big band, stompin' his way through *The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise* being egged on by drummer Gene Krupa and bassist Israel Crosby. There's also a contingent from the

Goodman band, including Goodman himself (how did Hammond ever get away with that - BG was under contract to Victor at the time!) under Gene Krupa's leadership with bassist Crosby again distinguishing himself on the aptly titled *Blues of Israel* and the whole band ripping through, of all things, Billy Hill's *I'm Headin' for the Last Round-up*. Bunny Berigan appears as leader of one of the pick-up groups and as sideman with Bud Freeman's Windy City Five. The Berigan sides also feature the work of under-rated pianist Cliff Jackson.

"Ridin' in Rhythm" is primarily devoted to the big band of Fletcher Henderson, plus various offshoots featuring Coleman Hawkins and Benny Carter and also the Henderson band under Horace Henderson's leadership. There are also some unfortunate sides by Duke Ellington's band (far from Duke's best) and also cuts by the Mills Blue Rhythm Band, Benny Carter's short-lived orchestra and Coleman Hawkins in various and strange settings. The Henderson band of the day was world beater with Hawkins on tenor sax and Henry Red Allen on trumpet and vocals. The first time you hear the Henderson band's up-tempo version of *Ol' Man River* with Red Allen's one note vocal, you'll probably be as flabbergasted as I was. More relaxed is Hawkins' ballad artistry on *It's the Talk of the Town*. Some of the Hawkins sides were recorded in England with studio musicians like pianist Stanley Black and guitarist Albert Harris, but my favorite Hawkins sides in this, or any other, collection, are two that he recorded during his tenure as featured soloist with Jack Hylton's band at the London Palladium. This is vintage Hawkins before his period of flowery ornamentation and what he does with such a trite piece as *Melancholy Baby* defies description. You'll have to hear it for yourself along with all the other sides on these DRG CDs.

While the sound is a bit unfocussed at times, digital remastering can only do so much. If the original is flawed, that flaw will stand out all the more in the digital mix and a couple of these originals sure were flawed. The sound is better than what we had on the 78s or the LPs and the liner notes are by Frank Driggs ... a fine writer who gets the job done ... tells you who's there ... who plays what ... and doesn't talk down to you and isn't as opinionated as I am.

The copy I have of DRG CDSW 8403 has the order of the Hawkins and Carter sides reversed. Whether the notes have now been changed or the CD itself, I don't know, but you can simply program your player for the tracks you want to hear in the order you want to hear them - it's no big deal. □



## RESPONSE TO JOEL WHITBURN'S LETTER

by Tim Brooks

I stand by the comments made in my review. *Pop Memories* was not well-researched, and as a result substantially misrepresents the popularity of many individual records (and types of records) during the early years of the industry. Forceful claims like "absolutely legitimate" and "overwhelmingly accurate" unfortunately don't change that. Mr. Whitburn's full letter is longer than the original review, and readers who wish the full point-by-point response may send a SASE to the editor.

But a few comments. I am quite familiar with the sources Mr. Whitburn mentions, and have photocopies or microfilms of most of them in my library. I double-checked them before writing the review to insure that all my statements were accurate. Put simply, the wealth of popularity information he says he found just isn't there. What is there has often been misinterpreted; for example, the listings in the *Phonoscope* were clearly headed "list of new records," not most-popular records. Repeat listings were the result of the *Phonoscope* reprinting the whole list, or substantial chunks of it, *not* singling out individual titles. The "extremely useful ... anecdotal information" he constantly refers to are *very* occasional comments like "Mr. Hunting says his new number ----- is going over well." How do you get week-by-week rankings out of that?

Regarding the many books Whitburn relied on — just because later books printed the same erroneous information over and over doesn't make it correct. Didn't we have enough of that during the phonograph centennial (e.g. the false date of Aug. 12, 1877 for the date of the invention of the phonograph. Whitburn speaks frequently of "cross-checking and factoring" bits of information, to "filter out" imperfections. However, if you cross-check and factor in garbage ...

I am amazed that Mr. Whitburn dismisses actual pressing and shipment data from Victor and Columbia (which, apparently, he didn't know about) because it doesn't agree with his anecdotes, or with what David Ewen said! The 1914-1921 *Talking Machine World* company lists he refers to, incidentally, are apparently the top six in Chicago only.

Finally, a more basic point. Whitburn has revealed far more about the sources, methodology, and intent of *Pop Memories* in his attack on my review than he did to readers of the book itself. I think those asked to pay \$50 for this volume deserve an equally full explanation of what they were getting. One of the most remarkable revelations of the

letter is that, for the early years at least, *Pop Memories* does not reflect a ranking of records at all, but a ranking of *songs*, as represented by their most "significant" recordings. This is not what the table of contents, the introduction, the "Researching the Charts" essay, or the listings indicate. The author then says "charted weeks during the 1890s reflect *months* of popularity." So what is labelled record popularity for specific weeks is actually song popularity for unspecified months! He then says he fixed the 1890's charts to show records (or is it songs?) rising and falling in popularity more rapidly than they really did, because to do otherwise "would so skew chart history as to make it incomprehensible in modern terms." If that's not rewriting history to match modern preconceptions, I don't know what is.

Beyond substituting songs for records and months for weeks, and altering the longevity of hits, all without telling the reader, there remains the fundamental problem of the sources; there just isn't enough information available to support this detailed a ranking. I've made some suggestions in my letter as to how such a project *could* be done, but that's another matter.

One last point bears mention here, especially since Mr. Whitburn (unlike some commercial authors) obviously does care about the accuracy of his work. (His prior works, indexes of *Billboard's* post-1940 charts, are highly regarded.) The most unfortunate cases of books gone awry that I've seen over the years have been those written by someone who kept to himself, showed his work to virtually no one, the sprung it on the collecting world full-blown. Many experts in early record research could have reviewed this project and offered constructive criticism *before* it came out; something could have been said ahead of time in *APM*, *The New Amberola Graphic*, *Record Research*, or the *ARSC Journal*. The Association for Recorded Sound Collections (a national organization) exists to help researchers keep in touch and exchange information. I urge Joel Whitburn, and others who undertake major research projects, to write short pieces for magazines, join an organization like ARSC, and show your manuscript to those knowledgeable in the field *before* this sort of thing hits the fan. Your book, and your readers, will be better served.

P.S. Mr. Whitburn has indicated in subsequent correspondence that he will consider making modifications in future editions of *Pop Memories*; I will certainly help him to the extent that I can. □



## BOOK REVIEW

*The Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings (1903-1908),*  
by Ted Fagan and Wm. R. Moran, 704 pp., \$65.00

Tim Brooks

Eighty-four years ago, confusion reigned at the Victor plant. Business was booming beyond all expectations, and Eldridge Johnson, the owner, had to face the fact that the basic numbering system he had set up three years before to keep track of his recording sessions just wasn't adequate anymore. So, in the midst of all the frantic activity -- new artists, new recordings, constant re-recording to take advantage of improved recording methods, different size records and new series being introduced, phonograph manufacture, and so on -- he introduced *two* elaborate new systems to maintain order in his recording lab activities. One was for *factory* use (a system of matrix numbers and codes) and the other was for *dealers and customers* (a whole new array of catalog number series).

For a while, his clerks and technicians, not to mention his customers, went crazy. Numbers got misassigned, engineers lost track of what 'take' they were on ("Didn't Collins record that song last month?"), and sometimes things didn't get written down at all ("What take *did* we issue? Was that the old system or the new?").

Eventually things settled down. In the years that followed, Victor expanded into a huge, sprawling corporation with quite complicated record keeping. Sixty years later, two rather obsessive record collectors (are there any other kind?) came along and decided to try sorting out exactly what had happened back in those early years. Unfortunately, by the 1960s, nearly everyone who had been involved was dead. One exception, an elderly lady who as a girl had toiled in the Victor listing department, refused to have anything to do with their project. Once was enough for her!

We are now 20 years beyond the point at which those two collectors wrote their first letter to Victor, asking to examine their original files. The fruits of Ted Fagan's and William Moran's exhaustive research are finally becoming available. Their latest volume, the second in what promises to be a long series, documents the confused but seminal days of 1903-1908 when Victor's recording program was taking shape. Fagan and Moran have resolved most of the confusion in Victor's own files; thus this book is an even better reference to the recordings than the files themselves! Eldridge Johnson would have

loved to have a copy.

Like volume one, which covered 1900-1903, this new volume is organized by matrix number -- no. 1 (recorded April 24, 1903) through no. 4999 (January 7, 1908). It is fairly bursting with detail on Victor recordings of the period. For each matrix (master stamper), we have artist, title, composer, 'takes' recorded (with dates), and the fate of each -- whether issued, unissued, and/or re-issued years later. The book even lists LP reissues that came out half a century later, as well as later 'takes' of early matrix numbers, even if they were made long after the original sessions (some high-numbered takes included here were made as late as 1930).

In keeping with the compilers' universal approach, all types of music and speech are represented, including vaudeville, coon songs, band numbers, show tunes, standard numbers, and the beginnings of Victor's vast classical repertoire. Are you interested in Billy Murray's first Victor session, or Enrico Caruso's? Silas Leachman's last? Or maybe in unissued recordings by Emma Juch or Pol Plancon or Ada Jones? There is literally something here for everyone interested in this period.

Notes and indexes enrich the main listings. These include the shows or operas from which the selections are taken, Canadian and British issues, the proper speeds (many) at which classical selections should be played (according to the authors), and more. There are 28 pages of "notes" about individual recordings, a chronological list of recording sessions, and separate artist *and* title indexes. A special section lists "Overseas recordings" made by Victor in Latin America between 1905 and 1907. Data on Victor's imports from British G&T will be included in the next volume.

The authors' policy is to provide special articles as a bonus with each volume, and this one contains more than 50 pages of informative text on the early history of Victor. Among the subjects covered are Victor's first exchange of matrices with G&T, the introduction of the famous Red Seal label, the short history of 8-inch and 14-inch discs, a thorough discussion of matrix numbering and physical characteristics of Victor discs (takes, stampers, speeds, runoff grooves, etc.), an illustrated guide to labels of the period, and information about Victor's acqui-



sition of Zonophone ("The Zonophone Company has been an awful drain on us" lamented Johnson in a memorandum). Such arcane matters as the meaning of the small "D" in the wax (indicating a Dennison recording machine) and how to identify dubbings (yes, Victor occasionally released acoustically dubbed recordings) are clarified for the first time. Almost anyone, no matter how expert, should learn something from these carefully researched articles.

What *doesn't* the *EDVR* have? Unfortunately, by this time, Victor had stopped noting the number of copies of each recording pressed (as they had from 1900-03), so we lack this fascinating data. More importantly, the files -- and therefore this book -- contain relatively sparse information on the individual personnel present at many of the sessions. We know it's Sousa's Band, but led by whom? Trios, quartets, and choruses do not generally have their members listed, and the studio orchestras (Victor Dance Orchestra, etc.) could be just about anybody. Sometimes the "usual" membership is given in the artist index, but we miss the detailed session-by-session personnel listings that are standard in the best discographies (e.g. those of Brian Rust). Apparently the information just isn't available for this early period.

The organization of the volume, while acceptable, is not ideal in my opinion. Information on any one recording may be found in several places -- dates under the main matrix listing, artist information (including the artist's first name!) in the artist index or sometimes in the sessions listings, and discussion of individual recordings in the "Notes." Most of this is cross-indexed, but with so much skipping around, it's easy to miss important information about a recording. It would have been vastly preferable to put *all* information about an individual recording in one place (presumably under the matrix entry), and have all other indexes simply refer to that one place.

One also hopes that the next volume will be proofed a bit more thoroughly. While the problem is hardly fatal, there are an annoying number of typos and minor errors, especially in spellings and in the indexes (the recording you're trying to locate may not be where the index says it is!).

Perhaps the most interesting part of this volume is the section of "notes" discussing individual recordings. It is here that we find information on still-unresolved mysteries, background on unusual recordings, and sometimes an explanation of their contents (con-

tents of medleys, differences between takes, etc.). Master researcher Bill Bryant provided much of this data, and Quentin Riggs and the late Milford Fargo also contributed. In one curious note, concerning Silas Leachman's "Turkey in the Straw" (catalog no. 804), Riggs says that the singer exclaims "Lawdy! Lawdy! Come on, Mr. Booth," proving the presence of Victor pianist C.H.H. Booth. Bryan rebuts, saying "No! What he says is 'Mr. Coon!'" I have to agree with Bill; my own copy sounds more like his suggestion. The *EDVR* compilers take no sides, drolly decreeing that "the matter shall be settled with 10-inch records at ten paces."

There are previews of what will come next in the *EDVR* series. The matrix listings will continue in 5000-number chunks; however, the next volume planned is a catalog number index correlating catalog number to matrix number, and covering the entire acoustic period, 1900-1925. This will make it easy to find the record you're holding in your hand in the main listings, since only the catalog number (not the matrix no.) is shown on most Victor labels. (Of course the reader can already find a given recording pretty fast via each volume's artist or title index). Bonuses planned for the next volume include a listing and discussion of the famous 5000 classical series (Victor's first, consisting mostly of imports) and an article on Victor's other catalog series of the pre-1925 period. Then it's back to the matrix listings, and into the 1910s.

The death of co-compiler Ted Fagan in early 1987 makes this impressive volume a lasting tribute to his enormous contribution to discography. It also, unfortunately, puts the future of the project in some doubt. William Moran has said that he will carry on, but even though most of the needed information has been posted out from the Victor files, there is a tremendous amount of editing, compiling and resolving of discrepancies to be done if the high standards of the first two volumes are to be maintained. Moran has asked for the support of fellow collectors, and we hope it is forthcoming, both in terms of sales of these early volumes and contributions of data in response to his published appeals. Libraries and any serious collector of the period should certainly have these volumes; they are not cheap, but information of this quality and quantity will be found nowhere else. If by any chance the early volumes one day go out of print, they will be worth a fortune. It (& Vol. 1) is available at your bookstore or directly from APM. □



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Next **Automated Music Shows** Sun., **Apr 24, 1988** at Best Western Coachman Inn, Exit 136 Garden State Parkway, Cranford, NJ. Phonos, Music Boxes, etc. (8am - 4pm). Lynn Bilton, Box 25007, Chicago, IL 60625. Or (312) 366-3903. Admission \$3.

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Researching cylinder discography for rags, coon songs, cakewalks, minstrel shows, etc. Looking for listings from the smaller cylinder record companies (already have Edison, Columbia, Lambert, Indestructible, and Everlasting). Xeroxes fine. Will share results. Galen Wilkes, 14027 Oxnard St., #31, Van Nuys, CA 91401.

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Compiling biographical catalog of Wangemann Edison cylinders, 1889-1892. Wish to locate surviving records from log book in *ECR*, 1889-1912. Thank you. Bennett Maxwell, 9 The Mead, Cleveland, Ealing, London W13 8AZ, England.

Researcher compiling history of US Phonograph Co. of Cleveland, OH. Seeks US Everlasting, Lakeside, Cortina Languagephone, & Mediphone cylinders. Catalogs, ads, etc are needed for complete listing of records. Originals or xeroxes OK. Bill Klinger, 13532 Bass Lake Rd., Chardon, OH 44024. Or (216) 481-8100 days, or 564-9340 eves.

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Edison, Columbia, Victor, etc. Phonos For Sale. Also parts Bought and Sold. Write for list. SASE. Ralph C. Woodside, 51 W. Main St., Georgetown, MA 01834. Or (617) 373-5947 eve's. (77)

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Cranford, NJ Spring 1988 Show Date: Sunday, **Apr. 24**. Largest show and sale of vintage phonographs, music boxes and automated instruments in the Eastern U.S. One day only, at the very accessible Best Western Coachman Inn, adjacent Exit 136, Garden State Pkway (No early buyer's fee). Our Fall event saw dealers attending from as far as California and Texas. Buyers from four continents attended. Admission, only \$3. Your name and address will bring a copy of our free newsletter, **Noteworthy News**, with interesting features about the hobby and descriptive of the show. For further information, contact **Lynn Bilton**, Box 25007, Chicago, IL 60625, or (312) 366-3903.

Oak Schoolhouse Victrola in excellent cond. Late 'teens model with Victrola #2 reproducer. \$1800. with records. Phone evenings (215) 745-8480. D. K. Szabo, 7032 Oxford Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111 (77)

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RCA Combo Victrola, Mod. RE73, Philco 20, Zenith 7S685 Combo. Edison 150 DD phono. J. J. Papovich, 216 Broadway, Westville, NJ 08093. Or (609) 456-4079. (77)

Brunswick Radiola Phonograph with records, fine cond. Mrs. Harriet Samuelson, 51 Croyden Ct., Somerset, NJ 08873. Or 201-580-1533.



### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Edison Fireside cylinder phono, #53698, exc. cond. w/ 76 4-min. and 4 2-min. cylinders and orig. oak 5-draw cylinder cabinet, also excellent cond. \$2200. or best offer. Dennis Szabo 215 745-8480. (78)

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Wanted: Cases for Columbia Coin-op machines. Sam Sheena, Days: (516) 334-5959, eve's (516) 626-1209. Or write to Sam Sheena, 534 Main St., Westbury, NY 11590.

Want Victor Orthophonic phonographs: Credenza, Granada, Colony, Consolette, etc. Any cond. Ralph Banta, Rt. 1, Green Forest, AR 72638. (80)

I would like to correspond with owners of Columbia & Edison coin-op machines to obtain catalogs, literature, prices, etc. for future purchase. David Cosmo, P.O. Box 522, Somers, NY 10589. (79)

Want original horns for Columbia Type A & BX Eagle - original crane fittings for Edison Std. D. Rapke crane/others. Rolls for Melodia paper roller organette. Red Gem in exc. cond. complete, plus black Gem the same. Top portion of Diamond B reproducer. Write Mark Dawson, 51 Flanders Avenue, Onekawa, Napier, New Zealand.

Victor items: Induction disc motors, Orthophonic reproducers & literature. Ron Pendergraft, 4611 Calaveras Avenue, Fremont, CA 94538. Or (414) 792-4155.

Going crazy, need info on Psycho phone (with clock). Please call Jim Ward, collect at (314) 822-3936, or write 12912 Topping Estates Drive, St. Louis, MO 63131.

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Receive "In the Groove", along with other benefits from the Michigan Antique Phonograph Society (**MAPS**). \$12 a year gives you full membership and 12 issues of the Newsletter. You will get to know collectors all over the U.S. Free classified ads available to members. Join now or send SASE for more info. MAPS, 2609 Devonshire, Lansing, MI 48910. (TF)

Phonograph Collectors are invited to join the California Antique Phonograph Society (**CAPS**), and may send \$10. for a one-year U.S. membership (Jan.-Dec.). This fee includes the Newsletter and meetings in W. Covina, CA. Send SASE for more information. C.A.P.S., P. O. Box 67, Duarte, CA 91010.

Looking for Victor VI in great cond. with 3 springs. Please send details/photo. Henry Arcuri, 2050 Mendocino Ave. #21, Santa Rosa, CA 95401.

### HELP: I NEED PARTS!

Want parts for Rosenfield Illustrated Song Machine and Rosenfield coin-operated record player. Also coin-operated phonographs, music box from old slot machines, and unusual coin-operated gambling, music and arcade machines. Mike Gorski, 1770 Dover Rd., Westlake, OH 44145. Or (216) 871-6071. (81)

Need for music box: parts and metal music rolls for it. Also 6" music rolls with metal pegs and 6" music paper rolls for small organ. Looking for a music box with metal records. Joseph Madaras, 30007 Michigan Ave., Inkster, MI 48141.

Want 2-min. lyric spring tension reproducer, used on the B-series of Columbia cylinder phonos. Phillip Drexler, 1175 E. Ripley Ave., St. Paul, MN 55109.

### HELP: I NEED PARTS!

Wanted: Wooden horns for Victor, Edison or "off-brands". Also would like to purchase cylinder cabinets, any condition. Mike Patella, 14790 SW 14 Str., Davie, FL 33325. Or (305) 473-8641. (77)

Have extra Class M baseplate to trade or sell. Also need motor portion only (below baseplate) for Edison Class Melectric phonograph. Allen Koenigsberg, 502 E. 17th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226.

Want all original 'branded case' lid for Edison Gem phonograph in fine cond. Also original winding key for Gem phono. Larry Dunn, 228 Castillian Ave., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320. (77)

Need 9-inch turntable for Busy Bee Grand disc phono. Also gold-plated knob for Victor XVI (upper door, smaller knob). Bill Flayer, 25016 Highspring Ave., Newhall, CA 91321. Or (805) 255-3363.

Looking for original Berliner strap-type reproducer. Original tinfoil phonograph. Charlie Stewart, 900 Grandview Ave., Reno, NV 89503. (83)

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I run regular cylinder auctions, as well as gramophones & phonographs. I also am extending into 78 rpm records. My next auction is of record catalogs and copies of the *Record Collector* magazine, over 150 lots. Write to: Rod Cornelius, 16 Jubilee Ave., Devonport, Auckland, New Zealand. (77)

Selling 78s, acoustic, electrical, (Fonotipias, G&T), old LPs, opera, classical, tangos, jazz, marches, popular, ethnic, South American music. **Arte y Sonido Records**, Casilla de Correo 4518, (1000) Correo Central, Argentina.

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World's finest collection. Vocal and instrumental 78 records, LP books on music, programmes, record catalogs, autographed photographs. Catalogs available on request. **Colon Records, S.R.L.**, 33 Orientales 955/57, 1236 Buenos Aires, Argentina. (77)

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## RECORDS WANTED

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Want to buy **military and concert band** records (Sousa, Pryor, Prince, etc.), brass, woodwind, percussion solos, duets, trios, etc. All labels, all speeds. Send your lists. State condition and price. **Frederick P. Williams**, 8313 Shawnee St., Philadelphia, PA 19118. (77)



### RECORDS WANTED

I buy Yiddish 78s featuring Jewish bands and instrumental soloists. Alan Haberfeld, Box 141215, Staten Island, NY 10314-0007. (78)

Anxious to obtain original or re-recording made in 1950s of John McCormack singing Faure's 'The Palms'. Please help. Ed Williams, 306 Eastline Dr., Middletown, OH 45044.

Film "Soundies" featuring accordionist Charles Magnante. 16-in. world transcription #3169/3176 featuring C. Magnante. Recordings, sheet music for the accordion. Stanley Bozynski, 8196 Thorn-tree Ct., Grosse Ile, MI 48138.

Trying to locate author & title (sheet music or record) of following words: "A mother of fashion was being arrayed by her dainty French maid Babette, While two little children in the nursery played, one was her darling, her pet," etc. Can anyone help? Mrs. Cecil Schirling, 2264 E. Old Philadelphia Rd., Elkton, MD 21921.

Diamond Discs: #51542 Golden Gate Orch. "Charleston"; #551868 "Christmas Recollections" by Yuletide Ensemble. Bill Eigenfeld, 388 Ave. X, Brooklyn, NY 11223.

Willing to pay reasonable prices for the following records; Al Jolson, Vic. 17318, Col. A-1356, Col. A-1374, Col. A-2007, Col. A-2106, Col. A-2560, Col. A3913, Col. A-3933, Col. 79-D, Bruns. 6501 Bing Crosby, any of the Brunswick 6000 series. Also want popular early turn of the century records of ragtime, band music, personalities, single-sided Columbia, pre-Dog Victor, and other early labels. Tom Perrera, 114-25 118th St., So. Ozone Park, NY 11420.

### RECORDS WANTED

Desperate for Caruso G&T; and a real photo of Bjoerling. Clara Koser, 2681 W. 2nd St., Brooklyn, NY 11223. (79)

Want recordings by Rudy Wiedoeft. Collector will pay fair prices. Charles Selzle, 1750 Cleveland Ave., Abington, PA 19001. (85)

Seeking recordings by singer Isabelle Winlocke, with or without accompaniment by the *Telharmonium* (1907 electric music instrument). Also want printed items & recordings involving the Telharmonium which sounded like an organ. Reynold Weidenaar, 5 Jones St. #4, New York, NY 10014-4133. Or (212) 255-8527.

Cal Stewart (Uncle Josh) on 7" discs; Berliner, Climax, Columbia, Oxford, Zonophone, etc. Also Cal Stewart on pink Lambert and Columbia 6-inch cylinders. Michael Bartholomew, 6560 Pine Cone Dr., Dayton, OH 45449. (78)

'How I Reached the Pole' by Cook; 'The Discovery of the North Pole' by Perry; 'A Dash for the South Pole' by Shackleton. Disc or cylinder. Michael Bartholomew, 6560 Pine Cone Dr., Dayton, OH 45449.

Al Jolson on *Little Wonder* records. "Back to Carolina", etc. Richard P. de Fabio, 1946 St. Francis Ave., Niles, OH 44446. (79)

Top prices paid for Mexican recordings by Teddy Stauffer and Japanese recordings by Weintraub Syncopators. Robert Masopust, Thiersteinallee 53, CH-4053 Basel, Switzerland.

Buying 78 rpm dance band, jazz, 1920-1935. Single records or collections. Send your sales/auction list. **Shellac Shack**, Box 32924, San Antonio, TX 78216. (81)

### RECORDS WANTED

Looking for early recordings (cylinder?) of Tunstall's Band (perhaps Tuncel's Big Four Orch.?) from Mississippi around 1900-1910. Thanks. Lawrence Gushee, School of Music, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801.

I will pay \$100. for cylinder or disc of a message from Catholicos Khrimian Hayrig to the Armenian people of the US. Must be original and in good to excellent condition. Greg Thompson, 15 School Lane, Watertown, MA 02172.

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